

The Planning Process to Develop a MFM Strategy
(From the Capstone Document, August 2005)
Adapted to Address Family Assistance and Personnel Behavioral Health Services

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Step 1

Form a Medical Examiner and Coroner Disaster Planning Team

- Evaluate existing disaster plans
 - Is there a plan for Mental/Behavioral Health and Family Assistance?
- Evaluate existing evacuation plans
- Evaluate existing resource management tools
- Evaluate existing laws regarding public health hazards/Emergency Health Powers (EHPs), Disaster Mental/Behavioral Health and Family Assistance

Step 2

Evaluate Current Disaster Response Capability

- **Identify Incident Management Structure to Include Behavioral Health Services and Family Assistance Response Organizations/Agencies**
- Identify personnel
 - Who will be providing Family Assistance Services
 - Who will be providing Personnel Behavioral Health Services?
- Identify support Agencies
 - Identify **Lead** Agencies for Family Assistance and Personnel Behavioral Health Services
- Identify existing equipment and needed equipment
 - Identify equipment and supplies for Family Assistance Center(s)
 - Support/Comfort of Families
 - Administrative Needs of FAC personnel
- Identify overall shortfalls that hinder basic daily case load

- Identify agency's surge capacity
 - Lead Agencies for FAC/BH Services
 - Support Agencies
- Establish memoranda of understanding (MOU) with vendors for time/availability of resources
- Assess area's surge capacity for crematoriums and cemeteries
 - Consider effects of limited capacity on families of victims, religious and cultural groups, and communities at large

Step 3

Network with Key Agencies

- Local and State Emergency Management Agencies
- Review Current jurisdiction's disaster plans
- Public Health Departments
- Health/Human Service Departments
- Hospitals/Medical Centers
- Voluntary Disaster Response Organizations
- Interfaith Organizations
- Funeral Homes
- Regional Disaster Mortuary Operations Response Team (DMORT) Commander
- Others

Step 4

Establish a Basic Mass Fatality Management Strategy

- Outline Personnel, resources, and interagency coordination requirements for a mass fatality disaster
- Create basic MFM plan for all types of hazards
 - Including behavioral health and family assistance services

Step 5

Establish an MFM Strategy for Specific Types of Disasters

- Use basic plan to address specific types of hazards (e.g., terrorist incidents, mass fatalities, hurricanes, fire, chemical contamination, etc.
- Outline personnel, resources, and interagency coordination requirements for each incident
- Develop annexes to the plan for each type of incident
- Address Behavioral Health and Family Assistance services in each plan or annex

Step 6

Build a Rapport with Supporting Agencies and Develop MOUs

- Area funeral home directors
- Contiguous jurisdictions: medical examiners, emergency managers, health directors, law enforcement, human service department directors, hospital representatives
- Area cemeteries
- Area crematoriums
- National Guard Units
- Area Military units
- Others

Step 7

Exercise the Plan and Identify Agency Capacity

- Workshops
- Tabletop Exercises
- Functional Disaster Exercise focused on fatality management – including behavioral health and family assistance services
- Full-Scale Exercise: disaster focus with fatality management incorporated – including behavioral health and family assistance services
- Develop capacity to manage a small-to-medium disaster involving non-contaminated bodies – including behavioral health and family assistance services
- Develop capacity to manage a small disaster involving contaminated bodies – including behavioral health and family assistance services

Step 8

Refine and Sustain the Plan

- Review and improve the plan
- Schedule disaster plan training internally and externally
- Schedule behavioral health and family assistance services plan training internally and externally
- Schedule disaster plan management tool review